

## **1. Applicant Information**

## **2. Project Description (500 characters)**

The Governor's Office will lead the effort to increase adoption of broadband throughout the state, with special emphasis on the Delta Region. The project leverages the successful community-based model of the Mississippi State University Extension Service to increase awareness of the benefits of broadband and increase digital literacy for targeted groups by working with local partners and deploying training curricula.

## **3. Multiple Submissions**

None

## **4. Application ID**

N/A

## **5. Estimated Funding**

- a. Federal
- b. Applicant
- c. State
- d. Local
- e. Other
- f. Program Income
- g. TOTAL

## **6. Eligibility**

- a. Must complete 66% of project in 2 years
- b. Which of the 5 statutory purposes for BTOP are satisfied?
- c. Match?
- d. "But For"
- e. Technical feasibility
- f. Budget is reasonable and Costs eligible

## **7. Executive Summary**

The Mississippi Broadband Taskforce (MBTF) was established by Governor Haley Barbour and charged with developing a comprehensive strategy to expand the use of broadband across the State. This application for Sustainable Broadband Adoption (SBA) will create local broadband planning and awareness teams in every county of the state, deploy curriculum to educate Mississippians about broadband-enabled applications, provide information to citizens about managing their health online, increase digital literacy among the state's unemployed and

underemployed, focus on the Mississippi Delta Region (the Delta), and enhance the access and digital literacy of youth and the elderly.

Mississippi ranks second to last in broadband usage according to 2007 Census data and last in terms of digital literacy according to the General Social Survey. There are an estimated 1.18 million Mississippians that do not access the Internet. The Mississippi Delta Region (the 14 counties that are part of the Delta workforce investment area), which is approximately 66% African American and where one-third of residents currently live below the poverty line, has some of the lowest rates of broadband deployment and adoption in the entire country.

Because of these challenges, the MBTF made the decision to approach broadband deployment and adoption in a methodical and staged approach over the course of the three rounds of ARRA funding. The State is submitting this SBA application in order to raise awareness and build demand in anticipation of expanded deployment in the coming months. This will work in conjunction with infrastructure and public computing center applications in Rounds 2 and 3.

MBTF's goal in this application is to develop an SBA program that would impact every county in the state immediately. Mississippi is fortunate to have a ready model in the Mississippi State University Extension Service (MSU-ES or Extension), the outreach arm of the State's land-grant university. For the last 95 years, its staff has been engaging the local population in every county and providing training through curriculum on workforce development, agriculture, and youth development. The MBTF will partner with MSU-ES to modify their existing model to provide outreach, raise awareness, and train individuals on the benefits and applications available through broadband. Because this proposed program is statewide, the demographics of the target population will mirror the demographics of the state: 37% African American, median household income of \$36,000, and approximately 83% without a bachelor degree or higher. It should be noted that the target population in the more rural areas of the state will be the less affluent, less well educated, and underemployed.

MSU-ES will hire 7.5 new full time individuals and will partially fund each of the 81 county staff persons ( $81 \times .1 = 8.1$  FTE).

The program includes several major components. The first builds on existing MSU-ES abilities to launch local "Connecting Communities" teams in all 82 counties. MSU-ES employees in each county will bring stakeholders together to develop broadband adoption plans for their communities and educate the local population about the benefits of broadband and online applications. Stakeholders include elected officials, local businesses, disadvantaged businesses, civic and faith based groups, senior centers, Native American Tribal communities, visitors' bureaus, libraries, schools, the disabled, and youth groups. Extension staff also will work closely with Anchor Institutions like community colleges, rural health care centers, and job training and placement centers.

MSU-ES will deploy broadband-focused curricula targeting small businesses, local governments, farmers, and health care centers to help them take advantage of the benefits of broadband. In addition, it will coordinate with local Workforce Investment Network (WIN) job training facilities around the state and community colleges to coordinate digital literacy workshops to

train unemployed and underemployed individuals for skills that can help them find higher-paying jobs.

The Mississippi Delta region will receive additional emphasis based on its level of need. In addition to the programs above, MSU-ES will work with the Center for Community and Economic Development, the Small Business Development Center, and the Entrepreneurship in Business Technology Unit at Delta State University. All three entities have extensive partnerships with disadvantaged communities and businesses in this 14-county region of the Delta.

Finally, this program will focus on youth and the elderly in an innovative program that will connect the generations by training 4-H youth to go into senior housing facilities to teach the benefits of broadband.

MSU-ES estimates that approximately 257,000 people will participate in at least one aspect of the program over the course of three years. This is based on actual numbers of participants in the current Extension program, WIN job center clients, 4-H youth participation levels, as well as the number of likely business, institutional, and government clients that may use MSU-ES curricula. There are approximately 379,000 Mississippi household subscribers of broadband today. Through the efforts of this program, we estimate that the rate of adoption will grow by 15% each of the three years, increasing the total number of Mississippi household subscribers by 197,500. This is an increase from 35% of Mississippi households having broadband to 53% at the end of the program.

The cost to provide this intensive, hands-on, and statewide program is \$5.7 million. This includes the time, training, and work of an almost 100 person team statewide. In addition, this funding will provide resources for the deployment and development of curricula to improve digital literacy. A 21% match will be provided by the MBTF and MSU-ES.

**8. Project Purpose (describe the problem and how this solves it; degree to which it meets at least one of the five statutory requirements; how does it reinforce other applications)**

According to the Census Bureau, Mississippi ranks second to last in terms of user access to the Internet. That is, only 59.7% of Mississippi households access the Internet anywhere, compared to 71.0% of U.S. households. Only about 35% of Mississippi households have access to broadband in the home, compared to 50.8% nationwide.

National statistics from the General Social Survey indicate that Mississippi ranks last in terms of digital literacy. When compared to the nation, 32% of Internet users in the state are very knowledgeable about relevant Internet activities, compared to 41% for the U.S. population. Also, 29% of Mississippi users are defined as having limited knowledge, compared to 23% of the U.S. population.

A multivariate analysis clearly shows that the adoption gap is not just a function of accessibility but also a lower level of digital literacy. To reduce this gap, educational programs aimed at

sustainable adoption of broadband use should focus efforts on the less educated, the elderly, and the underemployed currently in the workforce.

The proposed partnership with MSU-ES effectively addresses this issue by working in every county in the state to increase awareness and use of broadband. Sixty-five of Mississippi's 82 counties are considered rural and based on national models, have lower levels of broadband adoption. As part of the state's land-grant university, the Extension has focused on both rural and urban Mississippi areas for 95 years and is an integral part of these communities already. This is not a new program, but a retooling of an existing, proven program with almost a century of documented success. It is a sustainable model because once Extension staff receives new training and the Connecting Communities teams are in place, they will continue to increase awareness and build demand for broadband long after ARRA funding ceases.

The program clearly fulfills two of the five statutory requirements of BTOP.

- *Provide broadband education, awareness, training, access, equipment, and support to community anchor institutions, job-creating strategic facilities, and vulnerable populations.* This Connecting Communities program partners with local elected officials, local businesses, disadvantaged businesses, civic and faith based groups, senior centers, Native American Tribal communities, visitors' bureaus, libraries, schools, the disabled, and youth groups to develop broadband action and awareness plans for local communities. In addition, Extension staff will partner with WIN job centers and MDES to offer digital literacy training workshops to the unemployed and underemployed. MSU-ES will partner with community colleges (geographically dispersed in northeast Mississippi, the Delta, central Mississippi, southwest Mississippi, and on the Gulf Coast) to provide job training and expanded access to distance learning as well.

The coordinated awareness and adoption campaign in the Delta and among the elderly will help to increase awareness of broadband among senior citizens and the minority community.

- *Stimulate demand for broadband.* By utilizing and improving existing curriculum and by creating needs-based curriculum for targeted groups, MSU-ES will be training small businesses, local governments, civic groups, seniors, African Americans, and farmers about the ways that broadband can deliver practical benefits to their personal and professional lives. In addition to the educational activities surrounding managing health online, Mississippians in every county may for the first time see the benefit of broadband and increase their desire to subscribe.

As stated previously, this is the only application the State is submitting under BTOP in Round 1. However, this application is closely tied to our intended applications in Rounds 2 and 3. The MBTF made the decision to approach this opportunity in a methodical process. This Round 1 application will increase demand and awareness so that activity in Rounds two and three involving infrastructure will be more effective. In addition, as part of the program of demand aggregation, Extension staff will be assessing the ability for the local population to access the Internet in public computing centers. This information will inform our Public Computing Center

application in Round 2 and verify the data collected in the State's mapping effort. The applications in each Round are part of a larger multi-year strategy of increasing broadband adoption and deployment in Mississippi.

## **9. Leverage of other Recovery Act and Governmental funds**

The MBTF will coordinate this program with federally-funded WIN job centers to increase digital literacy for unemployed or underemployed individuals seeking job opportunities. In addition, the Taskforce will work in conjunction with a HUD Neighborhood Stabilization Program to ensure that new housing for low-income (below 50% of Area Median Income) individuals will include the option for access to broadband Internet. Finally, the Taskforce will attempt to include broadband access for facilities built with HUD Community Development Block Grant-Recovery (CDBG-R) funds, such as community centers and senior citizens centers, where appropriate and budget eligible.

## **10. Educational, health care, and children development impact**

*Mississippi in Motion:* Mississippi leads the nation in obesity. *Mississippi in Motion* is a program developed by the MSU-ES Health Group, in cooperation with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Mississippi and “Let’s Go Walkin’ Mississippi” to provide support and services that help alleviate weight and health issues from obesity. Under this SBA, MSU-ES would expand *Mississippi in Motion* to the Internet, enabling greater access across the state. The intent would be to build a new generation of web-based resources that incorporate interactive and video resources, to establish innovative age-appropriate nutrition and healthcare information, and to build a social networking component to the site – all elements that would bring new information to people attempting to manage their health care online.

*Youth Tech Teams:* A major focus of the Youth Tech program will be to strengthen the digital literacy of youth in Mississippi. MSU-ES will work with 4-H, a program that strives to improve the quality of life for Mississippi's youth by developing and providing "hands-on" (experiential) educational programs. Program priorities include leadership development, life skills training, the development of positive self-esteem, and volunteer empowerment. This joint partnership will develop 4-H Youth educators to launch a Technology Camp to be held on the Mississippi State University campus (targeted to youth 14-18 years of age), and will involve these high school youth in the delivery of educational training that helps introduce other youth and senior citizens to broadband and IT applications. These youth will also be trained to go into senior housing facilities to teach seniors how to use the Internet and to show the value that can be gained from using broadband. A special emphasis will be placed on recognizing and avoiding scams, inappropriate material, and other online dangers. Seniors are the lowest adopters of broadband, but seniors also represent the fastest growing adopting segment of the population. 4-H participants will learn digital and social skills that will help them later in life, while also learning about the dangers present on the Internet.

## **11. Relationships with socially disadvantaged small businesses**

MSU-ES will expand its relationship with the Center for Community and Economic Development, the Small Business Development Center, and the Entrepreneurship in Business Technology at Delta State University so that digital literacy training can be made available for disadvantaged and minority-owned businesses in the Delta.

## **12. How is this innovative**

This SBA program addresses the lack of broadband adoption in a strategic and multi-year effort through several coordinated initiatives. The integrated strategy including the Governor's office, several state agencies, institutions of higher learning, community colleges, local leaders, and grassroots entities is unprecedented in this state. Superior results are expected as this integrated team brings greater resources than a more limited localized or regional approach. The MBTF intentionally combined a top-down approach with support from state leadership with a grassroots approach more typically associated with the Internet.

The local "Connecting Communities" concept has been proven in other parts of the country to maximize community involvement and achieve results. Mississippi is improving upon this successful model by equipping Connecting Communities with world class curricula developed by MSU, so the Extension staff in each of the 82 counties has greater resources at their disposal. These curricula will assist individuals ranging from a local business trying to learn how to sell their goods to a worldwide audience through e-commerce, to an individual suffering with diabetes who can learn simple ways to improve their health through online resources.

One of the programs that will expand is a generational exchange between 4-H Youth and seniors residing in assisted living. MSU-ES already does extensive work with the 4-H Youth, a program that improves the quality of life for Mississippi youth by developing potential and providing "hands-on" (experiential) educational programs. In this program, MSU-ES will train youth to teach seniors how to use the Internet and show the value that can be gained from using broadband. A special emphasis will be placed on recognizing and avoiding scams, inappropriate material, and other online dangers. Seniors are the lowest adopters of broadband but also represent the fastest growing adopting segment of the population. This exchange will benefit both groups.

A key differentiator is that MSU-ES will employ a continuous metric-based review of the programs to ensure that goals are being met and funds are being spent in the most effective manner possible. To measure outputs, the number of meetings conducted and attendees included will be collected. To measure short-term outcomes (knowledge and attitudes), pre/post tests, retrospective pre/post surveys, and client satisfaction surveys will be developed and administered periodically by Extension staff. To measure medium-term outcomes (adoption), the State's mapping program will be used to identify the number of new households and businesses acquiring broadband access. To measure long-term outcomes (economic, social, and educational impacts), follow-up surveys will be conducted with targeted businesses (i.e., small, micro, and proprietor-owned establishments), local government agencies, and individual subscribers one year after they participate.

### **13. How many new household subscribers over 3 years**

197,500

*This is our internal justification:*

MS households in 2007: 1,079,584

Broadband adoption rate for households as of 2006: 25% = 269,896

Projected an average annual increase of 12% for 2006-07, 2007-08 and 2008-09. This results in an estimated number of households in 2009 with broadband in MS to be 379,184. The 12% represents the lower end of what the Pew Internet and American Life Project determined that annual uptake in broadband adoption in homes to be over these three years.

If you project that household broadband adoption will increase at a 12% rate over the next three years, then the number of new household subscribers by 2012 would be 153,542.

If you project a 15% annual growth in broadband adoption by MS households over the next three years, the increase in broadband adopters would be 197,507 households.

Thus, we can suggest the number of new subscribers would be in the range of 153,500 - 197,500 households in the state. This would increase the number of households with broadband in MS from 35% now (which is our estimate for 2009) up to 49% (if we use the 12% annual rate of growth) and 53% (if we use the 15% annual rate of growth).

### **14. How many new institutional / business subscribers over 3 years**

61,163

*This is our internal justification*

Current business subscribers (calculated it to be 35% of all small/micro and nonfarm proprietors):

Small/micro = 18,725 subscribers of 53,500 establishments

Nonfarm proprietors = 98,700 subscribers out of 282,000 businesses

If you assume an annual growth of 12% over the next three years:

Small/micro subscribers increase by 4,765

Nonfarm proprietors increase by 39,666

Total growth = 44,731

If you assume a 15% annual growth in subscribers:

Small/micro subscribers increase by 9753

Nonfarm proprietors increase by 51410

Total growth = 61,163

**15. How many new public computing centers / community college computer centers do you plan to create over 3 years**

**Extension**

**16. Demographics**

**a. Age**

- Persons under 5 years old, percent, 7.5%
- Persons under 18 years old, percent, 26.3%
- Persons 18 – 65 years old, percent, 53.7%
- Persons 65 years old and over, percent, 12.5%

**b. Ethnicity**

- White persons, percent, 60.7%
- Black persons, percent, 37.2%
- American Indian and Alaska Native persons, percent, 0.5%
- Asian persons, percent, 0.8%
- Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, percent, 0.2%
- Persons reporting two or more races, percent, 0.8%
- Persons of Hispanic or Latino origin, percent, 2.1%

**c. Gender**

- Female persons, percent, 51.6%
- Male persons, percent, 48.4%

**d. Median HH Income**

- Median household income, \$36,424

**e. Education levels**

- High school graduates, percent of persons age 25+, 72.9%
- Bachelor's degree or higher, pct of persons age 25+, 16.9%

**f. Disabilities**

- Persons with a disability, age 5+, 607,570

**g. Employment**

- Unemployment rate, percent, 9.0%

**h. Language**

- Language other than English spoken at home, pct age 5+, 3.6%

**17. How many people will be trained**



Approximately 257,000 adult and youth

**18. How many hours of training per person on average**

Approximately 10 hours per person

**19. How many FTE instructors / facilitators will we employ and what are their qualifications**

A total of 15.6 FTEs will be employed as part of this project to provide instruction and facilitation activities. All instructors have Bachelors, Masters and/or PhD degrees related to information and/or communications technology, community/economic development, youth development, or human sciences. All have teaching and/or facilitation experience either in formal or non-formal educational settings. The 81 county Extension staff members have experience performing similar functions at the local level already.

**20. How many bb-related equipment will be purchased (computers, wireless devices)**

6 Dell Latitude E6400 laptop computer with docking station and 20" widescreen monitor  
6 NEC LT280 Data/Video Projector  
6 Cannon PowerShot A2000 Digital Camera with Acc Kit  
2 Dell T7500 32 bit Precision Workstation

**21. Equipment Costs**

	<i>Unit</i>	<i>Total</i>
Laptop computer system	\$ 2,300	\$13,800
Data/Video Projector	\$ 1,640	\$ 9,840
Digital Camera with Acc Kit	\$ 350	\$ 2,100
Dell Precision Workstation	\$ 3,970	<u>\$ 7,940</u>
		\$33,680

~~22. Equipment purchase or loan program~~

~~23. Loan cost to borrower~~

**24. How many people will the awareness campaign reach**

1,500,00

**25. Describe the targeting, media, and messaging strategies for the awareness campaign**

To raise public awareness of the benefits of broadband and to communicate the scope and availability of broadband opportunities through this program throughout the state, we propose to

implement a multi-pronged communications plan to reach each audience relevant to the proposed program initiatives.

Target audiences include Mississippi citizens who currently do not use broadband applications, along with stakeholders, such as state and local community leaders, who will help champion this program and develop broadband adoption plans for their communities. We will also reach out to implementation partners, which include the Mississippi State University Extension Service (MSU-ES), the WIN job centers, the Mississippi Department of Employment Security and others, to provide them with a broad overview of Mississippi's Broadband Adoption and Deployment Plan. We will also target key organizations such as the Center for Community and Economic Development, the Small Business Development Center and the Entrepreneurship in Business Technology Unit at Delta State University to reach key audiences in the Mississippi Delta, a geographic area of particular focus given its level of need. And finally, we will work with MSU-ES to communicate to youth and the elderly regarding the program that will recruit 4-H members to teach broadband technology applications to seniors. Communications to each of these audiences can be effected easily and directly to each audience.

We initially propose two areas of focus for our outreach efforts. First, we will implement a broad, awareness-building campaign to communicate the objectives and benefits of the Sustainable Broadband Adoption programs that will be implemented throughout the state to all relevant audiences to make the general public, the business community and all stakeholders familiar with the initiative and how it will be rolled-out. With this initial outreach effort, we aim to create interest so that communities and stakeholders will want to be involved in connecting target audiences with the program initiatives. Secondly, we will work with our implementation partners, conducting outreach to each program's specific target audience to inform these individuals of the programs available to them and how to access these programs; for example, we will work with the WIN job centers to inform unemployed and underemployed residents of the digital literacy training workshops available to them.

We estimate a three-year budget of approximately \$100,000 for advertising and public relations associated with this outreach. Individual strategies include, but are not be limited to, working with the Mississippi Press Association to roll out a statewide print ad campaign and producing appropriate broadcast spots, both video and radio, for television and radio ad placement, as appropriate. These spots would also be amended and used for broadcast public service announcements (PSAs). We will also work with MSU-ES to disseminate program information through its radio and television programs, print materials and on its Web site.

Public relations strategies will include disseminating relevant press release(s) to statewide media, both print and broadcast, and holding a press conference with program partners to kick off the program and generate support and awareness. In addition, we will provide all participating partners with public relations articles and resources to promote the programs to each organization's target audiences.

We also intend to reach each discrete audience directly via the implementing partners' own internal communications mechanisms and through educational events designed to create awareness of the benefits of broadband and the availability of the new broadband education

programs. Potential educational events and mediums for target groups might be conducted live or via webinars.

We would also provide a website to host information regarding the program. We would drive traffic via our advertising and public relations efforts to the website. For those individuals that do not currently have broadband access, our advertising and public relations efforts would encourage these individuals to contact MSU-ES via telephone.

Through our multi-pronged advertising and public relations efforts, we would estimate that we reach approximately 1.5 million Mississippians out of a total population of 2.9 million residents.

## **26. Describe how we will measure the impact of the awareness campaign**

MSU-ES will employ a metric-based ongoing review of the programs to ensure that goals are being met and funds are being spent in the most effective manner possible. As part of this analysis the communications teams will be apprised of indicators so that awareness strategies can evolve as needed. Effectiveness of our communications efforts may be measured through a variety of metrics collected by MSU-ES including the number of participants in any given aspect of the program and the increase in the percentage of households using broadband technologies.

## **27. Total cost of project per new subscriber or new end-user**

\$29.97

## **28. Explain operational details of project, how the approach is effective and will achieve sustainable adoption in target population**

The MBTF sought to develop a SBA program that immediately would impact every county in the state. Mississippi is fortunate to have a ready model in the Mississippi State University Extension Service. It has developed an infrastructure over the last 95 years of staff in every county whose responsibility is to engage the local population and provide training through curriculum on workforce development, agriculture, youth development, and others. The MBTF will partner with the MSU-ES to modify their existing model to provide outreach, raise awareness, and train individuals on the benefits and applications available through broadband. The advantage of this approach is that the program can begin immediately upon award and will be sustainable within the framework of MSU-ES after three years.

In Phase 1 (Award date – September 2010) MSU-ES will hire Region E-Extension coordinators and train existing Extension staff on the program. The staff will then focus on setting up the Connecting Communities teams in each county, deploying digital literacy curricula, partnering with WIN job centers to provide monthly digital training workshops, and assess the Public Computing resources in each county. In addition, MSU-ES will expand its relationship with the Center for Community and Economic Development, the Small Business Development Center,

and the Entrepreneurship in Business Technology at Delta State so that digital literacy and e-commerce training can be made available for disadvantaged and minority-owned businesses in the Delta. MSU-ES will also partner with the Governor's office and other members of the MBTF to publicize this program.

In Phase 2 (October 2010 – September 2011) MSU-ES will build on the foundation laid in the previous phase by deploying existing applications focused on youth, health care, e-commerce, and other resources. In addition, the county staff will begin working with the Connecting Communities teams to implement the strategic planning they completed in Phase 1 so the demand analysis and aggregation transitions into new users. Incidentally, the State hopes that this time period will coincide with new infrastructure and Public Computing Centers allowing the demand and supply activities to converge. In addition, MSU-ES will begin deploying curricula to community college partners around the state so they can improve digital literacy in their target populations through distance learning. All activities from Phase 1 will continue concurrently.

Phase 3 (Summer 2011 – End of Program) will involve the introduction of new e-commerce resources related to e-government, social network strategies and search engine optimization for application by businesses, and the unveiling and delivery of new web-based resources that align with the information/education needs delineated by Mississippi communities as part of the Connecting Communities IT strategic planning activities completed in Phase I. MSU-ES will continue to deliver programs via its network of Extension educators and with the team of anchor institutions and organizations that it has worked with during the course of this initiative. The intent will be to continue delivering high quality educational and technical assistance activities related to broadband to individuals, households and groups that would not otherwise be positioned to fully capture the benefits of broadband. All activities from Phases 1 and 2 will continue concurrently.

MSU-ES will employ a metric-based ongoing review of the programs to ensure that goals are being met and funds are being spent in the most effective manner possible. To measure outputs, the number of meetings conducted and attendees will be collected from local Extension staff. To measure short-term outcomes (knowledge and attitudes), pre/post tests, retrospective pre/post surveys, and client satisfaction surveys will be developed and administered periodically by Extension staff. To measure medium-term outcomes (adoption), the State's mapping program will be used to identify the number of new households and businesses acquiring broadband access. To measure long-term outcomes (economic, social, and educational impacts), follow-up surveys will be conducted with targeted businesses (i.e., small, micro, and proprietor-owned establishments), local government agencies, and individual subscribers six months after they use our resources.

## **29. Resumes of management team**

Uploaded

## **30. Organizational readiness, including past experience in running federal programs of comparable size and complexity**

MSU-ES currently has professional educators working in every county to meet the needs of citizens, families, businesses, communities, and local governments through four major program areas: Agriculture & Natural Resources, Family & Consumer Education, Enterprise & Community Resource Development, and 4-H Youth Development.

While partnerships, distance education, economic security, and economic prosperity may be popular buzz words in today's technological environment, these are elements that have been part of the fabric of the MSU-ES for many years. That is why Extension is still relevant after 95 years of service to the people of Mississippi. Today, MSU-ES works with hundreds of agencies and organizations, and more than 10,000 volunteers, to meet the needs of families, young people, businesses, and communities across the state. Approximately, 146 hands-on information technology workshops involving over 2600 people and 523 hours of instruction were conducted for Extension specialists and clientele groups across Mississippi over the past year.

As the outreach arm of Mississippi State University, Extension has been actively involved in distance education, through the delivery of research-based educational programs from campus to remote communities across the state. As a land-grant university, Mississippi State University is often called the people's university, largely as a result of Extension's mission of advancing the well-being of all citizens. Extension develops proven educational programs in agriculture, helps entrepreneurs (both youth and adults) establish and maintain profitable enterprises, and provides personal financial-management seminars and information for workers in every sector of the economy.

MSU-ES plays a lead role in administering the state's Family Nutrition Program (FNP), a valuable program that teaches nutrition lessons to people who qualify for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (formerly known as the Food Stamp Program), and includes children in schools where the participation in the National School Lunch Program is 50% or greater. The overall goal of this program is to help Mississippians make smart nutrition decisions and healthy food choices. The program, which spent just over \$3.6 million last year, reached 69,961 Mississippi Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program participants who attended nutritional sessions at over 2,500 locations around the state. These locations included K-12 schools, community colleges and universities, MSU Extension offices, churches, community centers, and job training centers, to name a few. Evaluation data show notable improvements in each of the four overall objectives of the program related to participants' knowledge, ability, and action. The basic nature of the FNP is similar to the type of activity MSU-ES will undertake with this BTOP grant and has been successful.

31. Org chart – how does project team relate to overall structure of organization

**32. Key partners (anchor institutions, public safety, community organizations, vendors, etc)**

The MBTF's key partner in this endeavor is the MSU-ES, the community development arm of the state's largest land-grant university. MSU-ES currently works with community anchor institutions in every county in the state and will augment these partnerships with broadband awareness and adoption measures. This includes outreach, education, workshops, and curriculum. The Governor's Office will facilitate state agency cooperation and coordination including partnerships between MSU-ES and community colleges around the state in the Delta, central Mississippi, northeast Mississippi, southwest Mississippi, and the Gulf Coast. In addition, MSU-ES will work with MDES and WIN job training centers around the state in order to increase digital literacy among individuals seeking job training and placement.

#### Mississippi State University Extension Service

*Dr. Melissa Mixon, Interim Vice President*  
*Bo Beaulieu, Director, Southern Rural Development Center*  
*Dan Brook, Center for Education and Training Technology*

The MSU-ES will be the primary partner and administrator of this program. Under direction from the Governor's Office and the MBTF, MSU-ES will train county staff, develop curriculum, build upon existing partnerships with anchor institutions to raise broadband awareness and adoption, and track and report on the successes of the program.

#### Mississippi Department of Employment Security

*Tommy Dale Favre, Executive Director*

MDES will work with the MBTF to facilitate a relationship between MSU-ES and the WIN job training centers around the state. Together, we will design a digital literacy curriculum and facilitate workshops for the unemployed and underemployed in the state. It is anticipated that many will take place at the WIN training centers.

#### Delta State University

*Deborah Moore, Director, Center for Community and Economic Development*  
*Christie Sledge, Director, Small Business Development Center*  
*Cooper Johnson, Chair, Entrepreneurship in Business Technology Program*

With its outreach to disadvantaged communities and businesses throughout the Mississippi Delta, these three centers will serve as valuable partners with the MSU-ES in the delivery of digital literacy and e-commerce educational programs to low-wealth individuals, disadvantaged businesses, WIN clients, and community colleges located in this important region of the state.

### 33. Agreements in principal with disadvantaged businesses

MSU-ES will expand its relationship with the Center for Community and Economic Development, the Small Business Development Center, and the Entrepreneurship in Business Technology at Delta State University so that digital literacy training can be made available for disadvantaged and minority-owned businesses in the Delta. In addition, equipment will be purchased from Mississippi businesses listed on the Express Products List which are classified as minority-owned and operated when possible.

### **34. Project Timeline**

#### Q4-2009

- Recruit/select project coordinator
- Recruit/select Area Technology Agents
- Recruit Multimedia Developers
- Conduct training of County Extension Directors
- Update and upgrade health, e-commerce, and youth web-based resources - The multimedia developers will prepare these educational resources for delivery in Phase II.
- Purchase Equipment
- Launch “Connecting Communities” Strategic Planning Activity - Team will begin developing a broadband assessment and strategic blueprint regarding broadband strategies in their community/county.
- Establish partnerships with Workforce Investment Networks, community colleges, and key state agencies; collaborate with Delta State disadvantaged business programs - MSU-ES will begin offering courses to increase digital literacy among un- and underemployed individuals and expand the avenues available for delivering training on topics that will promote interest in and adoption of broadband in counties across the state.
- Assess Public Computing Center capabilities – The “Connecting Communities” teams will assess the options for public computing centers in their counties and report back to the MBTF.
- Launch Awareness Campaign – Develop and provide materials to raise awareness among target populations about the MSU-ES program.

2009 Challenges: Staffing and training will be the most critical first steps. The Governor’s Office must facilitate and drive collaboration by key partners such as WIN job centers and community colleges.

#### Q1-2010

- Develop report on broadband access - Prepare a report and submit to the MBTF based on the assessment of broadband access and challenges in the 82 ‘Connecting Community’ sites.
- Implement digital literacy training - Offer a variety of digital literacy programs through the Area Technology Agents, MSU Distance Education, and partners.

#### Q2-2010

- Identify and fund partners to develop web-based educational resources – Develop the educational resources that “Connecting Communities” have identified as needed.
- Launch Youth Tech Camp - A Youth Tech camp will be held during the summer of 2010. Eighty high school-aged students will take part in the training and become part of the training corps being established with the 4-H Program.

#### Q3-2010

- Conduct on-going evaluation of programs; document impacts

#### Q4-2010

- Launch e-commerce training targeted to businesses and farmers - Targeted to small/micro businesses, self-employed, farmers, retail sector, artisans, and potential entrepreneurs in the state.
- Establish Youth Virtual Clubs - 4-H Youth Extension educators across the state will create youth virtual clubs.
- Conduct youth and senior citizen IT training

2010 Challenges: Personnel focus and time will be the most important aspects to watch in 2010 as programs begin and they are pulled in many different directions. Key partnerships must be fostered and nourished to ensure productive relationships. MSU-ES must have the flexibility to act on reports and analysis to ensure goals are met.

#### Q1-2011

- Launch Mississippi in Motion Website
- Prepare new products for web-based application; update existing products, as appropriate, for web-based access - The multimedia developers and campus base technology agent will prepare the products developed by the resource specialists and partners (see item 1.10 above) for web-based access and application. In addition, current products – such as the child care training resources – will be updated/upgraded for use in Phase III.

#### Q2-2011

- Conduct Second Youth Tech Camp

#### Q3-2011

- Conduct on-going evaluation of programs; document impacts
- Continue e-commerce training, digital literacy, and other web-based programs

#### Q4-2011

- Launch training with new e-commerce curriculum products - Three new e-commerce products -- Web Presence Strategies for Small Communities and Local Governments; Using Social Networking Tools to Enhance Small Businesses; and Search Engine Optimization (SEO) Strategies, will be released and delivered to interested businesses across the state by MSU-ES and key partners.
- Continue e-commerce training, digital literacy, and other web-based programs

2011 Challenges: Building on successes and driving new subscribers will be critical tests in 2011. Staffing and focus will continue to be watched. MSU-ES must have the flexibility to act on reports and analysis to ensure goals are met.

#### Q1-2012

- Continue e-commerce training, digital literacy, and other web-based programs

#### Q2-2012

- Conduct third Youth Tech Camp



### Q3-2012

- Conduct on-going evaluation of programs; document impacts

### ~~35. Licenses or Regulatory approvals~~

### ~~36. Legal Opinion on applicant's ability to enter into award~~

### **37. Budget Narrative and timeline**

#### Personnel

A full time Ph. D. level project coordinator will be hired to handle the day to day operations and coordinate daily activities at the state and local levels working hand-in-hand with the project directors and management team. Five full time area technology agents will be hired to work at the district and county levels. One agent will be assigned to the MSU campus and will work across the State as needed in the higher demand areas and assist in the development of multimedia-based resources.

One full time multimedia developer and one half-time multimedia developer will focus their efforts on the conversion of existing paper-base related resources to online formats using a variety of development and delivery technologies. They will also focus on upgrading existing web-based educational resources that align with the needs of this initiative as well as developing new curricula as needed based on assessments from the "Connecting Communities" IT strategic planning teams.

Each of the 81 County Directors will provide the leadership at the local level and be the conduit through which all local efforts will be directed. Although each County Director will be assigned at the rate of 12.5% of their time (10% paid by from project funds and 2.5% as a match), they will be assisted by a full time area technology agent as needed.

As broadband assessments are conducted within each county, specific training needs may surface for which there may not be training programs and supporting materials currently available. During years two and three of the project where these situations develop, Resource Specialists with expertise in the specific area will be incorporated into the project to assist in the development and delivery of the identified training programs.

The project will be directed by Co-Principal Investigators who will have 5% of his time assigned to the project and will direct all technical aspects of the program. The Project Management Team will be composed of six professionals with extensive expertise in the fields of information technologies, community and economic development, evaluation, curriculum design/development, youth development, and communications. The members of the management team will each dedicate 5% of their time to this initiative.

Total amount of salaries to be paid from project resources will be \$3,115,078.

### Fringe Benefits

Fringe benefits for the personal on the project have been calculated at the Mississippi State University rate of 32.5% based on the individual salaries of the project staff. The total fringe benefit cost for the project will be \$1,012,399.

Total personnel and fringe benefit cost for the project will be \$4,127,477.

### Travel

The bulk of the travel funds will be used for in-state travel by all of the project staff. All team members will be traveling across the State to coordinate local and regional team efforts, deliver training curricula, and meeting with stakeholders.

Out of state travel will be limited to the two Co-PI's, the Project Coordinator, and the Project Management Team to attend regional and national broadband related telecommunication conferences to learn and gather information on developing and emerging broadband technologies and success stories across the nation.

There will be 960 workshops to be conducted by 80 youths who form the student Tech Teams. A professional 4H agent will travel to each of the 960 workshops to direct and supervise the work of the student Tech Teams.

Total travel cost for the entire three-year project for all personnel associated with the project will be \$922,250 to support in-state efforts, and \$ 78,000 for out-of-state project-related activities.

### Equipment

Equipment to be purchased on the project will include: Laptop System (6), Data Projector (6), Digital Camera and Accessory Kits (6), and Workstations (2). The laptop computer systems, digital cameras, and the data projectors will be assigned to the Project Coordinator and the five Technology Area Agents. These items will be used to support the daily activities carried out in meeting the assigned responsibilities of these specific individuals.

Total equipment cost for the project will be \$ 33,680

### Commodities and Contractual

Funds from the commodity category will be used to pay for printing of promotional materials, instructional materials and handouts, and assorted other paper-based materials used in the project. Contractual includes software, postage for mailing materials out to the county and district locations, possible industry publications related to broadband design and deployment, and for youth training camp expenses.

The Awareness campaign, which will reach 1.5 million people through a variety of media, will cost \$100,000 over the three year period but the majority will be spent up front publicizing the program.

Total contractual cost for the project will be \$ 254,900

### Indirect

Total indirect (F&A) costs for the project will be \$1,480,222 but the F&A that will actually be formally included in the project budget will be \$538,262. As such, the remaining F&A charges of \$941,960 will be included as part of the MSU-ES project match.

### Match Requirement

The 20% match requirement will be met in three ways: (1) the additional time (2.5% = \$326,919 plus fringe benefits) committed beyond the time being bought through the project for all 81 County Directors; (2) the combined time provided by the MSU-ES Communications Staff (\$30,000 plus fringe benefits); and (3) the 17% above the 10% indirect cost allowed on the project (\$941,959). The total match including all fringe benefits (\$446,418) and salaries will total \$ 1,219,565 for a total match of 20.6% on the project.

Project Grand Total = \$5,920,889

## **38. Explain why costs are reasonable and necessary**

The proposed budget is based on standard accepted rates established by the University. Salaries for the individuals working on the project meet the salary guidelines and scales established by the Mississippi State University Human Resource Management Department. The listed salaries are related to the Southeastern salary averages for the respective positions and with their associated level of responsibilities.

Estimated travel costs are based on the current State reimbursable rate of fifty-five cents per mile and historical records of travel expenditures for program delivery across the State within the Extension organization. Well established records of expenditures associated with the delivery of programming and services and the direct knowledge of the proposal development team were used to estimate the proposed travel budget. This team has significant experience in delivering effective programs and an excellent understanding of what it takes in travel funds to effectively implement programs of the type proposed in this project.

Equipment costs are based on the latest contract prices obtained through competitive bids and listed on the Mississippi Express Products list established by the Mississippi Information Technology Services agency. Prices continually change in the market place and it is possible prices could fall by the time this project gets awarded. Equipment will be purchased from Mississippi businesses listed on the Express Products List which are classified as minority-owned and operated when possible.

Commodity and contractual costs have been estimated based on a review of the past two years of expenditures for commodities and contractual expenses of the Computer Applications and Services Department.

## **39. Demonstration of Financial Need**

The State of Mississippi has been experiencing extreme budget constraints that are not improving. The Governor mandated across the board cuts in State Fiscal Year 2009 of 5% to deal with budget shortfalls. Revenue collections for July 2009 (the first month of State Fiscal Year 2010) were 11.27% below expectations meaning that the state's budget in State Fiscal Year 2010 could be in worse shape than in State Fiscal Year 2009.

The State Fiscal Year 2008 and 2009 budget allocations specifically for MSU-ES have remained flat, although the State Fiscal Year 2009 allocation was subsequently reduced by over \$1.5 million due to budget reductions mandated by the Office of the Governor. The State Fiscal Year 2010 budget continues to remain flat relative to the FY08 and FY09 budgets, but MSU-ES has been required to reduce its budget by 5% for the current fiscal year due to expectations that the state's revenue estimate in State Fiscal Year 2010 will not meet projections for the second year in a row.

In light of the tight fiscal situation that the MSU-ES is currently experiencing, the launching of a statewide effort to deliver broadband-related training, information and technical assistance to individuals, businesses, and communities across the state could not be realized without BTOP/Sustainable Broadband Adoption Program resources.

40. Financial statements for last two years

- a. Income statement
- b. Balance sheet
- c. State of cash flows

**Extension ???**

**41. How will project be sustained beyond the funding period**

MSU-ES staff will continue to educate individuals about the benefits of broadband in each county long after ARRA funding ends. Once Extension staff is trained and is familiar with the curriculum that will be developed, they will continue to provide that service as part of the normal operations of the MSU-ES program. The 82 county staff salaries will convert back 100% to the University. The Regional E-Extension Team leaders will not be funded but it can be argued that their utility will have ended once the program is firmly established at the local level and the county staff needs less support from regional supervisors. The volunteer "Connecting Communities" teams will be in place at the end of three years and will continue to increase awareness of and build demand for broadband after this particular funding ends.

42. Match

- a. Describe cash and in-kind
- b. Document the contribution – letters of commitment

**Extension**

43. Is the project already receiving federal support

**44. Other federal sources**

The Southern Rural Development Center (located at Mississippi State University) has secured federal support from the USDA/Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service in the amount of \$221,760 to invest in new e-commerce/broadband curricula. These resources are being developed on a competitive basis by Extension faculty across the nation. All curriculum resources developed to date (and over the next two years) as part of the Center's work are being provided at no cost in support of Mississippi's Sustainable Broadband Adoption Initiative.

45. Buy American waiver